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INDIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG MEN'S
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS.

—
1897.

The Inter-Collegiate Young Men's Christian Association of India and Ceylon.

Indian Representatives on the General Committee
of the World's Student Christian Federation.

Hon. K. C. Banurji, M.A., B.L.

S. Satthianadhan, M.A., L.L.M.

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Frank Anderson, B.A. Rev. J. H. Maclean, M.A., B.D.

Hon. K. C. Banurji, M.A., B.L. D. McConaughy, M.A.

S. Satthianadhan, M.A., L.L.M.

College Secretary.

J. Campbell White, M.A., *86 College Street, Calcutta.*

Associate College Secretary.

George S. Eddy, PH.B., *Y.M.C.A., Madras.*

—:O:—

Student Volunteer Movement of India and Ceylon.

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L. Hieb, B.A., is the Chairman of the Ceylon Committee. The names of the other members will be announced later.

* NOTE.—The two in the left column in each of the Sectional Committees were appointed by the Inter-Collegiate Young Men's Christian Association; the two in the right column by the Student Volunteer Movement; while the fifth was chosen in some cases by the other four members, and in some cases by a Missionary Conference.

The Inter-Collegiate Young Men's Christian Association of India and Ceylon.

BY J. CAMPBELL WHITE.

I. The World's Student Christian Federation.

"The most signal fact of recent years in the Christian college world is the formation of the World's Student Christian Federation." This Federation was formed in 1895, at the Scandinavian Students' Conference, representatives being present from each of the five Christian Student Movements then in existence: *viz.*, 1. The American Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association, 2. The British College Christian Union, 3. The German University Christian Alliance, 4. The Young Men's Christian Association Movement in Mission Lands, 5. The Scandinavian University Christian Movement.

Since then five other National Student Movements have been affiliated with the Federation, *viz.*, 6. The Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association of India and Ceylon, 7. The South Africa Student Christian Association, 8. The Australasian Student Christian Union, 9. The College Young Men's Christian Association of China, 10. The Student Young Men's Christian Association of Japan.

Five of the ten different Movements composing the Federation are made up entirely of organizations bearing the name of the College Young Men's Christian Association. These five Movements include at least six-sevenths of all the individual organizations represented, and eight-ninths of all the members.

II. Origin of the Movement in India and Ceylon.

Individual College Associations have existed in India and Ceylon for more than ten years. Since the organization of the Indian National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations in February, 1891, there has been a College Committee for the promotion of organized Christian work among Colleges and Schools. Nearly all of the Secretaries sent out to India from England and America have been leaders in Christian work among students at home, and bring the results of their experience to bear upon Indian student problems.

A great impetus was given to the work among students in India and Ceylon, by the visit of Mr. John R. Mott in 1895-6. In addition to visiting a number of the more important colleges, he was chiefly instrumental in conducting a series of seven Student Conferences, of which two were held in Ceylon and five in India. These Conferences were widely attended by leading Christian students, as well as by Missionaries and other workers, and much permanent interest was aroused. At the last of these Conferences, held at Madras in March, 1896, the group of twenty-two College Associations in India and Ceylon was recognized and affiliated by the World's Student Christian Federation as "The Inter-Collegiate Young Men's Christian Association of India and Ceylon." It was at this Conference also that "The Student Volunteer Movement of India and Ceylon" was formed, and related organically to the Inter-Collegiate Movement.

III. The Objects of the Movement.

The Objects of the National Movement are ;

1. To establish and develop College Associations in the Colleges and Schools of India and Ceylon.

2. To unite, in sympathy, prayer and effort, the College Associations of India and Ceylon.

3. To afford each Association the help which comes from organic connection with similar Associations.

4. To bring each Association into organic connection with the World's Student Christian Federation.

The Objects of each individual Association should be ;—

1. To spread Christian knowledge among students, and to lead students to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

2. To deepen the spiritual life of students.

3. To enlist students in the work of extending the kingdom of Christ throughout the whole world. The Student Volunteer Movement is to be promoted, as the Missionary Department of the Association.

IV. The Adaptation of the Movement.

The College Association has proved itself adapted to every kind of institution of higher learning, whether university, college, normal or professional school, or high-school. It works harmoniously in more than forty different denominations. While perfectly clear and definite in its objects, it is yet so flexible in its organization and methods that the largest liberty is allowed in meeting all peculiar local conditions.

It is believed that any merely local student Christian Organization, whatever its name may be, will be greatly benefited by becoming affiliated with this National Student Movement and through it, coming into organic connection with the world-wide student brotherhood now embraced in the World's Student Christian Federation. It may be natural for organizations of long standing to hesitate to change their names in order to become affiliated with this General Movement, but it is certain that there are very

great advantages in having a common name. The old name may be retained if thought best, as a sub-title, for example ; " The Y.M.C.A. of—College, Formerly the—College Prayer Union " The only two conditions necessary to affiliation with the National Movement are (1) The adoption of the name, Young Men's Christian Association, and (2) The confining of the control of the Association to the active members, *i.e.*, to the Christian members. In the case of the Reformed Syrian Church in South India, the spirit of the Constitution will be followed rather than the letter, with reference to all active members being actual communicants.

A word should be said about the relation of College Associations to the city Y.M.C.A., especially in the larger places. What the relationship shall be is entirely optional with the College Association itself. A College Association may be entirely separate from the city organization if it so desires,—electing its own officers and managing all its own affairs. Or it may be affiliated to the Central Association as one of the Departments, with a more or less close relationship, as may be decided in each case. As there are many advantages likely to come to a College Association from a strong Central Organization, it will be wise to consult freely about all questions with those in charge of the general organization.

Actual experience has proved that the double basis of membership has great advantages. While limiting the voting, holding office, and all management of affairs to the Christian members, it yet admits others of good moral character to the fellowship and privileges of the Association, and so makes it much easier to lead them into active membership. A large proportion of the conversions in the Young Men's Christian Associations the world over, are from among the Associate members.

V. The Supervision of the Movement.

The College Committee of the Indian National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations and its Secretaries, have general supervision of the work. There are at present two College Secretaries, who visit colleges, conduct correspondence, prepare and circulate literature, and assist in arranging and conducting Student Conferences. There are also Sectional Committees, appointed conjointly by the Inter-Collegiate Movement and the Student Volunteer Movement, which co-operate heartily in developing the work in their own Provinces.

VI. The Individual College Association.

The National Work exists for the sake of the local work. All experience goes to prove that the local work is greatly broadened and stimulated by contact with other Associations through the general work. This will be more true than ever, now that the World's Student Christian Federation has united the Christian students of the world into one great fraternity.

1. The Constitution.

A model Constitution for Christian Associations in Colleges and Schools has recently been revised and published. It may be obtained from any of the Secretaries of the National Council. Though only two of its articles need to be adopted by every Association in order to be affiliated with the Inter-collegiate Movement, yet it will be found best as a rule to adopt it practically as a whole, as it combines the best features of the most successful organizations among students. It provides for the election annually, of a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. It is believed that, generally speaking, it will be best to elect students or Indian Professors to fill these offices. Provision is made in the Constitution for the election of an Honorary President, who

would be a Missionary, as a rule, and who would assist the Association in all possible ways, while leaving the younger men to have the benefit of the actual management of affairs. The most important Committees are these : Religious Meetings, Bible Study, Missionary, and Membership. Some Associations may also find it desirable to have one or more of the following Committees : Distribution of Literature, Street-Preaching, Social, Reading Room, Music, Athletic, etc.

It may be that some doubt the expediency of the Committee system. It is simply an application of the principle of the division of labor. It results in many more people taking part in the work, and in all the work being better done. The Association is a Training School for Christian workers. Training comes largely by experience, together with the sympathetic counsels of those near enough to us to understand us and our circumstances. If the work is left to the officers, or to any two or three persons, it is found to be far less effective than if all take their share of responsibility, whether as members of Committees or simply *active* members of the Association. The best method of distributing responsibility is by the Committee System. It will be found that in this way many workers will be developed and will be very much better fitted for Christian service in any field they may enter after leaving college. The great success of the Christian Endeavor Movement, as well as of the Young Men's Christian Association, has been largely through enlisting a large number of workers by giving each one some definite thing to do. The number of Committees may be small at first, but gradually increased as suitable workers can be secured.

2. The Home of the Association.

Every Association should have a regular place of meeting, the place, size, and equipment of which should be adapted to the college or school itself, and also to the work of the Association.

This will often be a room in the college building, which the authorities agree to being used for this purpose.

3. The Meetings.

One regular devotional meeting should be held each week, at a fixed time and place, and a persistent effort should be made to have every Christian student present, and taking active part in every meeting. In some cases it may be found best to have a written agreement to this effect, similar to the Christian Endeavor pledge. A book of suitable topics for these meetings may be secured from the Indian National Council. It is a great mistake to make these meetings formal and rigid. They should be "brief, bright, and brotherly." While the leader should have a plan for the conduct of the meeting, he should be ready to alter it at any time during the meeting, under the direction of the Spirit. The Religious Meetings Committee should select the leaders for the meetings, who should be as a rule from among the students themselves. They should also make all other arrangements for the meetings, taking special pains to induce all Christian students to attend and take some active part.

One of these regular devotional meetings each month should be made a Missionary Meeting. If there is a Missionary Committee, separate from the Committee on Religious Meetings, it should have charge of this meeting, arranging for the leader, subject, speakers, music, etc. As a rule it will be best to have two or three short papers, carefully prepared, at the Missionary Meetings. Such topics as the following would be suitable for these papers: 1. Lessons from the Life of Livingstone, 2. of Carey, 3. of Duff, 4. of Judson, 5. of Morrison, 6. of Mackay. (The Christian Literature Society, Madras, publishes quite a list of missionary biographies, so cheap that any Association can afford a

supply of them). 7. Christ, the Master-Missionary. 8. The Missionary Spirit of Paul. 9. The Holy Spirit in Mission Work. 10. Prayer and Missions. (Get pamphlet on this subject from Frank Anderson, Y.M.C.A., Bombay, for one anna, post free). 11. The Bible and Missions. 12. Every Christian's Responsibility for Obeying the Great Commission. 13. Opportunities, during College Days, for Active Christian Work. 14. The Student Volunteer Movement, (a) Its History (b) Its Watch-Cry. 15. Rewards of Missionary Service. 16. Conditions of Success in Missions. 17. The Effects of Idolatry. 18. The Reflex Influence of Missions. 19. The Success of Missions. 20. The World's Greatest Need. 21. The Church's Greatest Need. 22. My Greatest Need.

Special care should be taken that prayer has a prominent place in these meetings. If definite objects of prayer can be mentioned, it will prove helpful.

4. Bible Study.

The Bible Study Department has frequently been called the most important department of the College Association work. If it is neglected, all departments must suffer. If it is strong, it will have a great effect on all other lines of work. The Bible Study Committee should strive to enlist every Christian Student in the daily systematic study of the Bible. Many non-Christian students may also be led to do this if stimulated to it, and directed in it. An admirable course of daily Bible Readings has been adopted by the Indian National Council, as well as by most of the Associations throughout the world. It may be obtained for one-half anna from David McConaughy, Y.M.C.A., Madras. It provides for reading the entire New Testament every year, and the Old Testament every two years. Every one should have some system of daily reading, and this is one of the best systems in use.

All Christian Students should be urged to observe the "Morning Watch." Many hundreds of people in India are doing so to their great benefit spiritually. There are many real advantages in having the very first half hour of the day set apart for meeting God, in Bible study and private prayer. The passages in the Y.M.C.A. Bible Reading Calendar may well be made the basis of this daily feeding upon the Word.

In addition to this, classes should be organized in which groups of men may pursue their study together, meeting for one hour at some regular time each week. The course should be clearly outlined in advance, extending over one college session. The leader may be either one of the students, or someone else who has special interest in this line of work. All of the members should contribute to the interest and profit of the study by very careful preparation. Courses of study may be secured from the National Council, or suggested by some Christian Professor or Missionary.

5. The Missionary Work of the Association.

The College Association is primarily responsible for its specific field, the college or school itself. It is first of all for the development of the Christian life of the students themselves, and the leading to Christ of those who are not yet Christians, that the Association exists. To neglect this work for any other, however important, is a great mistake. It will doubtless be found easier to go away from your own immediate surroundings, and do Christian work among strangers, than to deal personally with those with whom you mingle freely day by day, but let not this lead you to neglect reaching for Christ your fellow-students, who are to exert so great an influence, either for good or evil, on the future of India.

The methods most to be employed in reaching them are, 1. Prayerful Personal Dealing, 2. Evangelistic Meetings, 3. Distribution of Literature, 4. Bible Classes. All of these methods may be employed successfully even though the number of Christians is very small. If the students in any institution are not themselves able to conduct evangelistic meetings, they may at least arrange for such meetings occasionally, when outside speakers may be secured. All the other lines of work may be pursued if there is even one Christian in the institution, but where there are more than one, they should cooperate both in prayer and in effort ; and co operation is only another name for organization. It was said of the enemies of the sinful Israelites that "one shall chase a thousand, two shall put (not two thousand but) ten thousand to flight." And the advantage of agreement in prayer is made very emphatic by the promise "If two of you shall agree as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done." The history of all the Student Christian Movements in the world proves most emphatically, that infinitely more is accomplished in institutions where Christian Students all work together, along definite lines, for definite results, than where no organized work exists. Organization, where properly managed, has invariably resulted in more Bible Study, more personal work, more men taking active interest in Christian work, more prayer, more spirituality, more conversions. Is there not then abundant justification for a Christian Association in every college and school in India and Ceylon, where there are as many as two Christians ?

Let not the emphasis upon the work to be done in the college or school itself, lead anyone to put less emphasis upon reaching with the gospel as many as possible of those in the surrounding community. Every opportunity should be eagerly seized for spreading the good news as widely as

possible. Some colleges in addition to what their own students can do, may be able to support a representative who will give his whole time to evangelistic work. Sunday-school work, Street-preaching, Tract-distribution, Hospital-visitation, etc., furnish abundant opportunity for sowing the seed of a rich spiritual harvest.

6. How to Organize an Association.

The method of organization is very simple indeed. Let those come together who are interested in the spiritual welfare of the students, and decide by vote that an Association be organized. Then read the Model Constitution for Colleges and Schools, issued by the Indian National Council, and if possible adopt it as it stands. If any alteration seems necessary, decide by vote to make it. After the Constitution has been adopted, elect the officers, and fix the time for the regular weekly meeting. The Committees may be appointed later, after the officers have had time for carefully considering the matter. In order to be affiliated with the Inter-Collegiate Movement, the officers should send to the Secretary of the Indian National Council at Madras, an attested copy of its resolution ratifying Article 1, and Article 3, Section 1, of the Model Constitution.

7. The Perils of the Association.

We quote the following admirable summary from Mr. Mott's pamphlet on the College Association.

An Association to be fore-armed must be forewarned. The perils mentioned are those which have proved most disastrous.

1. Isolation. The Associations which have been separated from similar organizations in other colleges have become narrow in policy, inefficient in work, and comparatively fruitless. This is true

whether in the case of the individual Association, or those of a section.

2. Pride. There are Associations which at one time stood in the front rank, but which are now in the seventh or eighth, simply because they became proud of their achievements. Let that Association which thinketh it standeth take heed lest it fall.

3. Dependence upon machinery. Some of the most elaborately organized Associations have been most inefficient, simply because the leaders have failed to recognize that the power is of God.

4. Failure to recognize and to seize points of strategic importance. For example—failure to carry on a well conducted campaign in the interests of new students; failure to rally men into Bible classes during the first two or three weeks of the college year; failure to conduct a vigorous financial canvass at a time when students have the money; failure to insure proper leadership of the Association forces by neglecting to send a strong delegation to the Student Conferences; failure to plan to make the most out of a visit of a travelling secretary.

5. Divisions, factions, or jealousies among the workers. It is impossible for an Association to overcome the obstacles and opposition from without, if its own force is broken into warring camps. How miserably petty and contemptible such discord appears when compared with the paramount interests of the Kingdom and with the glory of God. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is unity.

6. Inconsistent lives of officers and members. An Association may as well disband if it expects to have any real influence with unconverted men while its members indulge in known sins or questionable practices. God never honors an Association that trails the banner of Jesus Christ in the dust.


7. Compromising or apologizing for the vital principles on which the Association is based. Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour, Keeper and Lord, is the Rock on which the whole Association structure must rest. The Association which fails to recognize this in actual belief and practice is building on the sand. Its work will not endure. Nothing has been taught more eloquently and impressively by the experience of the Associations.

8. How to Make a Success of the Work.

Believe in God. Be assured that God wishes to work, and that He wishes to work *through you*. Give yourself wholly to Him, and throw yourself with earnestness and intensity into His service. Fear no man. Never expect failure. Look upon yourself as in the position of the greatest opportunity you may ever have for serving God in saving men. Be ambitious to do the will of God. Let no sense of your unfitness keep you from doing your best. Feed daily upon God's Word. Spend time enough in secret prayer to live a life of victory over sin. "Be filled with the Spirit," and keep filled by obeying Him. "Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God." "For God is able to make all grace abound toward *you*, that *you*, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work."

PUBLICATIONS

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3. Proceedings of the Second National Convention, Bombay, 1892 ... 2 Annas.
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